

IMPROVING ENGLISH VOCABULARY BY USING PRINTED MATERIAL COMIC STRIPS FOR THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KUDUS

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ABSTRACT

The process of teaching and learning is the main key for the successful of educational system. The interaction between teacher and students is very essential in the class. National curriculum is the guideline for the teachers in making lesson plan and also the media of teaching. The purposes of this research are 1) to know whether *Printed Material Comic Strips* can improve the English vocabulary of the Junior High School students in Kudus 2) to know the extent of the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the English class when the teacher use *Printed Material Comic Strips*. This research belongs to action research which is applied for the students of VII A SMP 2 Bae Kudus consisting 30 students. Before conducting the research, the writers gave pre test to know the vocabulary of the students. The result of pre-test shows that the mean score is 68.27, while the standard score (KKM) is 75. Then, the writers collaborated with the English teacher to do cycle I using *Printed Material Comic Strips*. The mean score of cycle I is 76.97. So, the writers continued to do cycle II. In cycle II, the writers also gave evaluation to the students. The mean score of cycle II is 85.10. In delivering the materials, the teacher felt easier by using comic. Furthermore, the students were enthusiastic and active in the class. Based on the observation, the English teaching and learning process is more attractive by using comic. In addition, comic can improve the students' vocabulary.

Keywords: Vocabulary, Printed Material Comic Strips

Introduction

In the current era of globalization, learning is no longer using the approach of Teacher Centre Learning but has led to the Student Centre Learning. It doesn't mean the role of teachers will reduced in the learning process. Teachers are facilitators who set the course in the classroom by not reducing activity that should be done by the students. However, the teacher's role here is not as a dictator who dictates in teaching. Teachers should be able to create a conducive atmosphere in the classroom. So the selection of teaching media should be based on the characteristics of the students.

In English language learning ideally teachers should use the media in teaching. However, the teachers do not realize the importance of learning media. In the school curriculum, English is taught in integrated skill. Harmer (2007) stated that the instruction in the process of learning English is needed for the students. So the students are expected to be able to communicate well.

Material taught in Junior High School is still something to do with student life . But they are still difficulties due to its limited vocabulary. In addition, the students' English knowledge is limited, they still find the difficulty in learning English. So the selection of teaching strategies and media must comply with the conditions of the students.

Based on the illustration above, the writers want to provide a solution to learning English with the use of *Printed Material Comic Strips* as a media to improve Junior High School students' vocabulary in Kudus through Classroom Action Research because in *Printed Material Comic Strips* the students will gain a new vocabulary that can improve their English knowledge.

Teaching Media

There are many kinds of opinions about the value and benefits of a variety of teaching media, but basically the same teaching materials that convey the message properly, interesting, creative and structured to students. Sudjana and Rival (2009:2) describe the value and benefits of teaching media into the following:

1. Teaching will attract more attention to foster students' motivation to learn
2. Teaching materials will be clearer meaning that can be understood by the students, and allow students to master better teaching purposes
3. Teaching methods will be more varied , not merely verbal communication through the narrative of words by the teacher, so students do not get bored especially when teachers teach to every hour lessons
4. Students are doing more activities to learn, because not only listen to descriptions of teachers, but also the other activities such as observing, demonstrating, etc.

Due to the benefits derived from the use of teaching media, so the media should always be applied in lesson plans which are the duty of teachers to create learning activities are organized. Teachers do not necessarily choose the teaching media by themselves but there are several criteria that must be considered to determine the appropriate teaching media for particular teaching material.

According Sudjana and Rival (2009:4), there are several things to note about the teaching media. First, teachers need to have an understanding of teaching media for instance types and benefits of teaching media, using the media as a teaching aid and follow-up the use of media in the teaching and learning process. Second, teachers are able to make simple teaching media for the purposes of teaching, especially the two- dimensional media or graphic media, three- dimensional media, and projections media. Third, knowledge and skills in assessing the effectiveness of the use of media in the teaching process.

Comic Strips as an English Teaching Media

The use of comics with color illustrations, the story and the realistic and interesting characters can motivate students of all age levels (Sudjana and Rival, 2009: 69). Short utterances in English can be translated by forward translation or as an idiom. Comic strips can be used as a vocabulary teaching media which is an essential component of a language, especially a foreign language is rarely used outside of the classroom by Junior High School students.

Vocabulary as a Language Component of English

Teaching vocabulary is now being ignored by many teachers due to the four English skills. Many teachers think that four English skills namely listening, speaking, reading, writing is the most important in teaching English. In fact, many students have lack of vocabulary that make them difficult in mastering English. So, the teachers have to find the appropriate technique or media in teaching English. In this case, the teachers can use comic strips as a media for the students. Comic strips have

more complete component than relia and flash card because comic strips consist of simple story and complete expression.

Methodology of the Research

This research belongs to classroom action research. According to Gregory, Kemmis, and McTaggart (in Richard, 2000: 12) classroom action research is the research which is done to investigate whether the teachers use the appropriate teaching method and improve the students' achievement. In addition, Bogdan and Biklen (in Burns, 1999: 30) classroom action research is the order of information which is systematic to make the social changes.

There are some steps in the action research as follow:

1. Planning: is the process of developing a critical analysis of the information received
2. Action: is the process for taking action to implement the plan
3. Observation: is the process of observation of the impact of information critically to the contexts of the research targets
4. Reflection: is the process of reflection towards the impact that occur in the future

The diagram of classroom action research can be explained below:

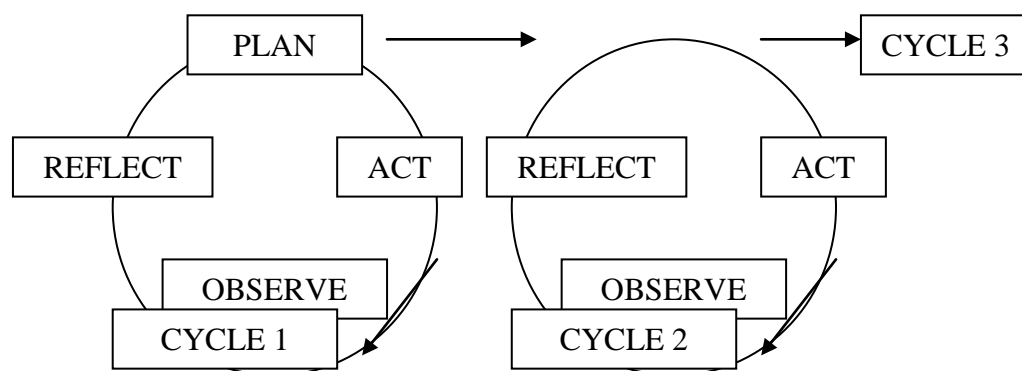


Figure 1. The steps of classroom action research (McNiff, 1992: 23)

Subject of the Research

The subjects of this research is the students of class VII A SMP 2 Bae Kudus consisting of 30 students. The researchers chose VII class A due consideration several reasons for students of class VII A has almost the same of the English skills. It can be seen from the achievement of their English so the need for their treatment is needed to improve their English language skills, especially vocabulary. In general, they are the students who are cheerful and enthusiastic in learning English.

The Result of the Research

The Use of Printed Materials Comic Strips to Improve English Vocabulary for the students of VII Grade of SMP 2 Bae Kudus

This study aims to apply the use of media Printed Material Comic Strips to improve students' English vocabulary of the VII Grade of SMP 2 Bae Kudus. Before carrying out the cycle, the writers interviewed the English teacher of VII A SMP 2 Bae Kudus. She is Sri Lestari, S.Pd. It is done to determine the condition and problems faced by students in learning English. The writers also asked

about the media used in teaching English teachers and students' response about teaching media used by teachers in teaching English. In this case the teacher provides information that is very difficult to make students active in learning English. Most of the students are still difficulties and shy in expressing ideas in English. Besides that, the students also have limited English vocabulary and the motivation in learning English is low. The teacher also stated that it is very difficult to make students active in the classroom because some students think that learning English is difficult.

Pre – Test

Before executing the first cycle, the writers gave the students a pre - test to determine the extent of vocabulary possessed by students. Pre -test activity was attended by 30 students of Class VII A SMP 2 Bae Kudus and held on Wednesday, 4 September 2013.

Based on data from the pre - test, the writers found that the mean of the pre - test score is 68.27, while the standard score (KKM) of English lesson in class VII SMP 2 Bae Kudus is 75. Most of the students got score under the KKM. This can be seen from the data obtained, there are only 2 students who reached the KKM or just 7.32 % while 28 other students or 92.68 % is below the KKM .

Based on the mean score, the pre-test students can be categorized fair. The writers concluded that it is necessary for the teacher to conduct an active and creative in teaching English in class VII A. Therefore, the writers collaborated with English teacher to conduct research on learning English by using Printed Material Comic Strips as a media to increase students' vocabulary. While the results obtained from the pre - test is used by the writers to analyze problems and make plans in cycle I.

Cycle I

The first cycle I was held on Monday and Wednesday, 9 and 11 September 2013. This activity was attended by 29 students of class VII A of SMP 2 Bae Kudus because 1 student did not attend the class. In the teaching process, the teacher used the media of Printed Material Comic Strips. During the learning process, the students became interested in comics delivered English teacher. At the end of the first cycle the teacher also provide an evaluation of the student in the form of an oral test.

Based on the result of the first cycle, the writers found that the mean score in the first cycle of evaluation tests is 76.97. Most of the students have reached the KKM. This can be seen from the data scores, there are 24 students got more than 75 or 84.54 %, while there are still 5 students who are under KKM or 15.46 %.

Based on the mean score, the results of the first cycle of evaluation can be categorized as good. The writers still assume that the score is not maximized because when it is compared with the KKM score, the improvement is only 1.97. Thus the writers continued activity to the second cycle.

Cycle II

The second cycle was held on Wednesday and Monday, 25 & 30 September 2013. This activity was attended by 29 students of class VII A of SMP 2 Bae Kudus because 1 student did not attend the class. In the teaching and learning process, the teacher used the media of Printed Material Comic Strips. During the learning process, the students were very interested in the English language in

comics delivered by the teacher. At the end of the second cycle, the teacher also gave an evaluation for the students in the form of an oral test.

Based on the results of the second cycle, the writers found that the mean score in the second cycle of evaluation tests is 85.10. All students have reached the KKM. This can be seen from the data that of all students scored is above 75 or 100 %.

Based on the mean score, the results of the second cycle of evaluation can be categorized as very good. The writers assume that the score achieved by students is a maximum. Thus the writers didn't need to continue to the third cycle.

The Effectiveness of Learning English by Using Printed Material Comic Strips

The notes of the observations that have been conducted by the writers in each research cycle , both in the first cycle and second cycle, may indicate that the comic strips can be applied as an effective media of learning English. Observation research includes teacher-led learning process through the material flow and measures of teaching and student responses in each cycle. The following description of the results of observations of the writers from two cycles of Classroom Action Research (CAR), which has been done in class VII A of SMP 2 Bae Kudus.

Observation of Cycle I

Teacher's Response

The teacher seems very enthusiastic and interested in the research when the researcher asks her to be the collaborator in this Classroom Action Research. it can be notified that the teacher finds the content and materials in comic strips is fitted with the learning materials in the beginning of the odd semester grade VII of Junior High School. Greeting and Introduction are the materials delivered unconsciously can add the students' vocabulary.

In this step, teacher uses the lesson plan prepared by the researcher. The lesson plan provides the consideration and explanation about the materials, plot, and the steps of teaching using the teaching media of comic strips.

When the teacher delivers the materials in front of the class, she gets an easy point in relating the comic strips as the teaching media with the vocabularies that are commonly used in greeting and introduction. The students' attention is mostly addressed to the story of comic strips and the teachers' explanation improves the effective method used to deliver the materials. The class is also managed well and focused. Teacher explains orderly based on the story in comic and students keep listening to her.

Teacher does not translate or interpret immediately the expressions in the comic strips, but she asks the students to do a brainstorming about the graphic design and also the expressions of the comic. Using that method can help the teacher in providing the description to the students through the story of the comic. The students worksheet provided by school only provides dialogues as the examples of using expression without concrete pictures to improve students' imagination like comic.

The teacher also can easily ask the students to describe the situation and condition in the story of comic strips. Pictures or characters in the comic can explore the students' vocabularies and improve them more besides mentioned in the expressions of the comic. The students are asked to list the difficult words and immediately translate the difficult words. The teacher controls the process of students' translating activity, so there will be no misunderstanding.

Students' Response

In cycle I, when each of the students get the comic, they seem so enthusiastic. The researcher describes this thing based on the observation done through the process of cycle I. Most of the students open the comic and read it immediately when they hand the comic. It proves that comic is still effective to attract students' motivation of reading, especially for young learners. If the students are interested with the learning media at the first time, the next process of teaching and learning will run smoothly and make a good output.

The interesting English teaching method is recommended for teachers to attract the students to learn the International Language. It will not be a scary lesson anymore for the students who do not like to learn language in the classroom.

The students enthusiastically write the difficult words and check the translation in the dictionary. It can show that the students' vocabularies can stay longer in their mind. Because they do not feel that they are forced to learn and find the translation in the dictionary. Unconsciously, the students know and apply the vocabularies in the expressions used by the characters in the comic.

Observation of Cycle II

This cycle is the next step of the research to complete the previous cycle I. Teacher successfully leads the students to understand and apply the expressions used by the characters in the comic strips. They also practice the dialogue in front of the class. Based on the evaluation, the researcher expects a significant result to prove the effect of comic strips as teaching media from the pre-test and evaluation of cycle I. Before conducting it, students are expected to respond the questions of evaluation test with short answers and correct in English. After that, the students are expected to respond the questions with complete answers to improve their vocabularies. The description of the observation of the researcher from the students' and teacher's responses are as follows:

Teacher's Response

As well as cycle I, teacher does not find any difficulty when she delivers the materials in front of the class. The teacher uses the lesson plan prepared by the researcher. There is an improvement of the treatment in cycle II, it is the teacher asks the students to do a role-play of the characters in the comic. This step shows that the teacher needs to apply method of drilling so that the students can understand more and do the instruction well.

Teacher randomly asks questions to students using the expression in the comic. After it seems enough to ask questions, teacher chooses some students to give an example of how to do a role-play in

front of the class. After this activity is conducted, the teacher controls the students performance in front of the class.

Students' Response

Students can learn by their own in learning the content of the comic. They also practice the dialogues with their classmates. When they are asked to perform the role-play, they are able to do it without bringing any text. Students have courage and motivation by raising their hands to perform in front of the class.

Drilling is conducted by the teacher and the students are lead to answer the questions completely. Students' responses are great because they can answer the questions faster than before with correct pronunciation and structure. The students are also happy in trying to practice the dialogues in the comic without any further instruction from the teacher.

Conclusion

The conclusions of the research in using *Printed Material Comic Strips* in teaching the VII A grade students of SMP 2 Bae Kudus are: 1) The result of this research showed that there is an improvement in vocabulary taught by using *Printed Material Comic Strips*. This improvement is based on the test in cycle I and cycle II. The mean score of cycle I is 76.97, while in cycle II is 85.10. It means that there is an improvement 8.13% from cycle I to cycle II. The improvement indicates that the students' vocabulary improved. 2) The effectiveness of using comics as a teaching media can be seen from students' and teacher's responses in cycle I and cycle II. Comic strips is appropriate and effective for teaching media because it gives the easy way for the teachers to deliver the materials. It also gives effect for the students' ability in understanding the expression delivered by by the characters in comics.

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